



## USDA Forest Service Fire Communications Guidance

- On fires on National Forest System lands, Incident Information Officers (IIOs) work for the USDA Forest Service, even if they are not regular USDA Forest Service employees. IIOs on incidents can respond to questions from all news media, including national news media, ***about the incident only***. IIOs will refer all news media questions that are not about the incident that they are working on to the local National Forest Public Affairs Officer (PAO) or to Jennifer Jones, Public Affairs Specialist for the USDA Forest Service at the National Interagency Fire Center. Jennifer Jones can be reached at her office at (208) 387-5437, on her mobile phone at (208) 631-0406, or by email at [jejones@fs.fed.us](mailto:jejones@fs.fed.us)
- The USDA Forest Service local unit is responsible for the content of fire communications during and after a fire. IIOs must coordinate continually with the local Forest PAO and/or line officer. Delegations of Authority will stress the importance of line officer responsibility for all fire communications.
- Facebook pages are not approved for the USDA Forest Service. IIOs or other Incident Management Team members will not create Facebook pages for fires on National Forests. Tweets should alert followers that new information is posted on a website managed by those responsible for the content, such as InciWeb, a National Forest website, or a county website. Social media protocols are under development with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- The National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) is key in fire communications. If media are interested in information beyond a specific fire and its management, the IIO should refer questions to the local National Forest PAO if the question is about the local National Forest or to Jennifer Jones at NIFC if the question is about a national fire related issue. The local National Forest PAO and NIFC will be tied in to the USDA Forest Service Washington Office Press Office, which will coordinate with the USDA Undersecretary for Natural Resources and Environment and the USDA when necessary.
- The USDA Forest Service has signed on to the National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group's 2010 Fire Season Communication Themes and will provide additional USDA Forest Service key messages soon. News media questions that go beyond the 2010 Fire Season Communication Themes or USDA Forest Service key messages should be referred to the local National Forest PAO or to Jennifer Jones at NIFC. As needs arise, NIFC and the USDA Forest Service Washington Office Press Office can provide additional messages.